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THE NEW POLAR STATIONS.—The Danish station has been changed from Upernavik, as first proposed, to a more southerly position at Godshaab, on the west coast of Greenland, so as to be at a greater distance from the American station at Lady Franklin Bay and the Austrian at Jan Mayen. The expedition, which is well fitted out at government expense, will sail from Copenhagen about May 20th, and is expected to reach Godshaab at the end of June. It is to remain there until September, 1883.

The Dutch propose to establish their station at Dicksonshavn, at the mouth of the river Yenisei, unless the ice prevents their reaching it, in which case they will go to the north-east point of Novaya Zemlya. Funds have been supplied for this purpose partly by the government and partly by public subscriptions. The party will be about twelve in number and will take with them all the instruments and apparatus specified by the International Polar Conference besides other instruments and a wooden house. It is hoped that an ascent of the Yenisei can be made in a steam launch.

The British Government has granted the sum of £2500 and the Canadian Government \$4000 for a circumpolar station.

The Italian Antarctic Expedition started from Buenos Ayres on November 8, 1881, under command of Lieutenant Bove. The government of the Argentine Republic has sent out a commission with the expedition for the purpose of carefully revising the survey of the coast of their country; thus the expedition now consists of four ships, viz: *Santa Cruz*, *Uruguay*, *Cape Horn* and a steam bark. The *Cape Horn* is the largest vessel and will proceed to the Antarctic regions, while the *Uruguay* will remain at Cape Horn. Lieutenant Bove hoped to leave Cape Horn by the end of December, in order to sail across to South Shetland and Grahamsland. He hoped to be back at Tierra del Fuego by the end of March, to stay there until May, and then to leave for Buenos Ayres.

MICROSCOPY.¹

MEASUREMENT OF MICROSCOPIC APERTURE.—Hon. J. D. Cox, in a very interesting article in the *Am. Month. Mic. Journ.*, discusses the present method of measuring angular aperture of the microscope by taking the angle of which the apex is the center of the microscopic field of view, and whose sides bound the telescopic field of view when the microscope is turned into a telescope, either by removing the ocular and looking down the tube with the naked eye, or by substituting a terrestrial eye-piece by restoring the ocular and adding an objective as an erector in the draw-tube. By experiments, confirmed and explained by geometric principles, he concludes that the telescopic aperture, however correctly measured, is not the microscopic aperture; and that the difference, which is practically immaterial in objec-

¹ This department is edited by Dr. R. H. WARD, Troy, N. Y.

tives of high power and short working distance, may become, with low powers, large enough to destroy the usefulness of the common methods of measurement of the lenses measured, a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch varied from 36° to 38° telescopic aperture to $39\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ microscopic, while a 3-inch ranged from $13\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ to 19° . Change of draw-tube caused a variation of several degrees.

A NEW JOURNAL.—The (English) Postal Microscopical Society has undertaken the publication of a quarterly journal, the first number of which appeared in March. It is edited by the very able Hon. Sec'y of the Society, Mr. A. Allen, of Bath, and published by W. P. Collins, of London. Its primary object is the preservation of the most important notes and drawings from the note-books of the Society; but it will also contain original papers, notes, extracts, and correspondence upon microscopical subjects. It will be freely illustrated, and will doubtless prove an entertaining and instructive visitor.

SUMMER SCHOOL OF BIOLOGY.—Microscopists can enjoy rare opportunities for sea-shore collecting and laboratory work, at the Summer School of Biology of the Peabody Academy of Science, which opens at Salem, Mass., on July 11, and continues four weeks. Among the special advantages for microscopical students, will be a course of lectures on physiological botany, by Professor C. E. Bessey, of Iowa, and a course on anatomy and physiology of vertebrates, by Professor A. H. Tuttle, of Ohio.

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SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— It appears that the hunting of alligators in Florida is carried on to such an extent as to threaten the extirpation of the species there. Nothing is used except the skins on the belly and legs. The rough scaly plates on the back are rejected. The heads are cut off and buried for a few days, till the tusks can be detached. It was announced lately that one person had collected alligators' teeth to the amount of three hundred and fifty pounds. This will give some idea of the destruction going on. On the St. John's river a new method of hunting has been devised. A dark lantern, with a powerful reflector, is used on suitable nights; and no difficulty is experienced in approaching the quarry. The animals seem bewildered with the strong glare, and make no effort to escape. The gun is held within a few feet of the head—a touch to the trigger, and there is one "gator" less in Florida. This process is very effective, and the hunters are enabled, not only to kill, but to secure their prey. Large numbers of these animals are slain annually by tourists for amusement only, besides those slaughtered for profit. Further, many young alligators are stuffed as specimens, or sent off alive as curiosities, while myriads of eggs are blown or disposed of by dealers.—*English Mechanic*.